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ABSTRACT

There is something about Western rhetoric that separates the spirit from discourse. Western-European rhetoric, civil and religious, is dominated by the rhetoric of power. The rhetoric of power has long been available to students of rhetoric, and those who have studied the history of Western rhetoric know its topography. To begin to understand a faithful or spiritual rhetoric, however, look at the rhetoric of the dispossessed, the Fourth World, who live on the borders of and are placed in conflict with the dominant culture. A basic difference between power rhetoric and Fourth World rhetoric is spiritual positioning. One example of this is the definition of the Fourth World found in the tribal peoples of the Southwest. Nations within a nation, the Pueblo people are easily described as Fourth World in the socio-political definition, but their understanding of the Fourth World differs; it is, instead, a spiritual and ethical description. The socio-political discourse practices of these people are situated in their spiritual reality so that civic and spiritual activities are so interwoven as to be inseparable. The rhetoric of the Fourth World is an integrated one where ceremony, council deliberation, and community dialogue function from a spiritual rather than a socio-political position. A lesson, essential to communal survival in a postmodern world, might be learned from the rhetorical perspective offered by the Pueblo people. (Contains 10 references.) (CR)

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Presented at the 1995 4Cs

Notes Toward a Definition of a Rhetoric for Emerging Nations: Spirit, Rhetoric, and the Fourth World

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> I found myself wanting to define rhetoric in such a way as to appease or please the spiritual longing so necessary to my way of working and thinking, and I found I wanted to do this in such a way as to indicate to others how this way of spiritual-rhetorical working and thinking was a part of rhetoric's tradition.
>
> — bell hooks

It's a pleasure to talk to rhetoricians who recognize the central role of the spirit in rhetoric. The issues of spirit, faith, and belief are central to rhetoric. They are not peripheral concerns because the spirit and faith are critical to both the composer and auditor if something is to be said and someone is to listen. We live in a post-foundational as well as a post-modern world. Rhetoricians can no longer assume an affinity with the audience, and our acts of composition and publication are acts of invocation and invitation. Thus, we are seeking descriptions of a "faithful" discourse, which allow us to invent and/or discover the relationship between the composer, the subject, and the audience and to nurture that relationship.

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There is something about Western rhetoric as we have come to know it that separates the spirit from discourse. Western-European rhetoric, civil and religious, is dominated by the rhetoric of power. I include pulpit rhetoric because a study of it reveals how heavily it has drawn upon the rhetoric of power and domination, often in the service of evangelical motives. The church's role in the subjugation of the indigenous peoples of this continent is just one example. The kind of rhetoric I suggest we learn and teach is not the rhetoric of power and coercion but the rhetoric of reconciliation and community. I say this recognizing that for some the idea of a rhetoric of reconciliation seems an oxymoron and that for others such a rhetoric seems overly romantic. But the kind of rhetoric I want us to consider is essential and practical because it is a way of bringing the diversity of our nation together through spiritual understanding.

In order to understand a faithful or spiritual rhetoric, we need to understand the ways in which power rhetoric has served rulers and the way in which those people that are dispossessed and marginalized carry on discourse and rhetorical acts. The rhetoric of power has long been available to us as students of rhetoric, and those of us who have studied the history of Western rhetoric know its topography. What it maps out for us is the ways to discover all the available means of persuasion in situations where the rhetorician is included in the discourse community. However, if we want to begin to understand the rhetoric of the dispossessed, we need to look to

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those people who live on the borders of the dominant culture and to those who are placed in conflict with the dominant society. Mary Louise Pratt's definition of "contact zones" offers us a starting point. She describes contact zones as the place where people with disproportional shares of power meet and contend. However, the emphasis on power relationships should not lead us to focus entirely upon the definition of political power as we know it because to understand the marginalized we must come to understand their interpretations of power beyond the definitions of civil and monetary power. What the dispossessed rhetorician regards a power may be spiritual power, the power of ethical appeal, or the power of the community, and this power may be revealed to us through stories, lore, ancient texts, aesthetics, and appeals to pathos rather than through the usual appeal of power and civil discourse, which is logic.

The place where we most often look for the rhetoric of the dispossessed and marginalized is in the rhetoric of the Fourth World. Perhaps the best known book about the Fourth World is Leo Hamalian and Frederick Karl's The Fourth World. They identify the Fourth World as the world of the imprisoned, the poor, the sick, the elderly, and the underaged in America. "When we speak of the Fourth World", they say, "we speak of a sub-nation within the larger nation, of an invisible group running to more than one-quarter of the population" (Preface). The definition of the Fourth World has since been associated with sub-nations within nations, and the definition of Fourth World peoples has expanded, through the efforts of the United Nations, to include the interests of ethnic groups deterritorialized within the borders of countries and to women, not only in America but throughout the world.

Hamalian and Karl's definition of the Fourth World and our understanding of its peoples is based upon a definition appropriate for a socio-political perspective of rhetoric. We recognize Platt's contact zones, where political power is exerted and contested. The rhetoric in this description seems clear enough from our studies of power rhetoric: it is oppositional, whether the rhetorician be a member of a First World society or a Fourth World society. It is a conflict based rhetoric, and the statement of an ancient advisor to his ruler sums up the politics and the rhetoric of relationships among sub-nations and nations: "The big fish eat the little fish, and the little fish had better be numerous and fast" (Campbell 15). Our studies of rhetoric from this perspective prepare us for argument, conflict, and resolution through combative discourse such as debate. Someone will be judged, and someone will win while someone will lose. Winning and losing are measured by gains in political and social power.

Power rhetoric as we learn it is satisfactory, useful, and necessary in this context because it is a rhetoric of attack and defense. For those in power, rhetoric serves their ends of maintaining power through rational discourse, rational in this case meaning "logical" and "reasonable" according to the standards of the community in power. For those not in power, however, it is best to remember that the "masters house will not be torn down using the master's tools" (Lorde), and

those Fourth World peoples who engage in the debate often further the ends of those in power by accepting their rules for discourse. Thus, from the perspective of Fourth World people, the acceptance of power rhetoric is the acceptance of the dominance of those in power and that acceptance furthers the ends of the powerful. One example of the interplay of power rhetoric with the socio-political realm is the current situation in Ciapas, where the Zapatistas, who are a sub-nation within a nation, were required to surrender their arms and come to a place surrounded by government troops and tanks in order to "negotiate" a peace settlement. This situation stands as an analogy for the ways in which power rhetoric serves those already in power and intimidates the marginalized.

Now, it is obviously important for us as rhetors to teach all our students the rhetoric of power because it is often necessary for their self defense. Our understanding of rational deliberation and argumentation provides us and them with the ability to both recognize coercion and to counter it in adversarial situations. However, if we are to understand and work with Fourth World peoples we must find an alternative to Western-European colonial thinking and the rhetoric associated with it. We must begin to recognize how rhetoric's functions in the Fourth World differ and how rhetoric's techniques differ and how rhetoric's ends differ. Often, a basic difference between power rhetoric and Fourth World rhetoric is the former's spiritual positioning.

One example of this is the definition of the Fourth World found in tribal peoples of the Southwest. Nations within a nation, the Pueblo people are easily described as Fourth World in the socio-political definition, but their understanding of the Fourth World differs; it is a spiritual and ethical description rather than a socio-political definition. If the post-modern world in any way can be describe as fragmented by the socio-political view, the view of the Pueblo peoples reveals a faith in unity through diversity, and for them rhetorical acts begin in the spiritual realm. In some way, beginning in the spiritual realm might be considered a "constraint" upon the acts of discourse because if the rhetorician does not begin there, the audience will not include the rhetorician in their community.

Consider the Hopi's definition of the Fourth World. For the Hopi, the Fourth World is the complete world. It is the last world into which the people emerged. In the Fourth World, the people were divided into Hopi, Apache, Zuni, and many other tribes including the Whites. Simply put, the tribes spread over the Fourth World to claim it for the creator. There will come a time, they say, when the tribes will come back together, and there is a belief among the people that a white person will come to them in friendship and all the people will share in a new world of harmony, beauty, and plenty. Their world view does not ignore argument, hatred, or evil, but it does recommend we move on. We are, according to the story, all transients, following a guiding star that will show us where to settle (Frank Waters; Harold Courlander).

In the socio-political definition of the Fourth World, all discourse starts with the assumption of opposition and power. Faithful discourse, in this perspective, is based on the belief that social and political power are the only reality and that there will be a winner and a loser in a conflict. For the disinherited and the marginalized, participating in socio-political rhetoric means accepting the code of power rhetoric, and, often, this acceptance runs contrary to their basic beliefs. The Hopi's description of the Fourth World suggests a different approach to the rhetorical situation. Instead of assuming antagonism, it offers a starting point of reconciliation. It suggests a spiritual purpose for discourse: the reunion of a people scattered for the purpose of claiming the world for the creator and charged with the responsibility of recognizing their family when they meet. It recommends a communal perspective of rhetoric that recognizes diverse and differing tribes, unique in themselves, that nevertheless share a common humanity.

In the Western-European tradition, spiritual rhetoric is separated from civic rhetoric or is appropriated by civic rhetoric. The socio-political discourse practices in the Hopi's Fourth World are situated in their spiritual reality so that civic activities and spiritual activities are so interwoven as to be inseparable. Rhetoric, in this case, cannot be separated from other acts of discourse. Two examples of this are the kivas and kachinas.

Kivas are communal and ceremonial centers for many Pueblo people's. In the cosmology of the Hopi, the kiva is a recreation of that place where the people entered this world — the Fourth World. The Spanish called the kiva "estufas," because the underground chambers reminded them of a stove (Preston 302). The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia describes some of the activity in a kiva:

> The people would retire to them to weave, discuss pressing community issues, and tell stories. Dances in celebration of planting, harvesting, and the coming of the gods were also held there. At the traditional times of the year, sometimes on a frigid winter night, dark figures disappeared down ladders into the confines of the kiva. Glowing sparks flew from the smoke hole, and the smell of juniper filled the air. Villagers moved purposefully about the plazas, making careful preparations. At a signal, as many people as possible jammed into the kiva and waited patiently for the dancers. They appeared, dressed in deer hide leggings, faces painted or covered with masks. Their trance-like chants, accompanied by the sound of turtle rattles and drumming, lasted through the night until everyone was exhausted.

It's significant, I think, that the encyclopedic description uses the past tense, yet the kiva is to this day a vital part of the communal life of the Pueblos and one of the sites available for communal rhetoric, rhetoric that includes ritual, dialogue, discussion, and argument within the framework of a spiritual/social setting.

Kachinas partake of the rhetoric and the aesthetics of the Fourth World. Kachinas may be a spirit, a mask, a doll, or a person. Our understanding of kachinas often comes to us through the dolls Pueblo people sell to tourists. But a kachina is a living representative of the spirit world. Not only are the kachinas spirits, they also have a physical presence in the community through the

people who are given the mask and the role of the kachina. In the Pueblo, you will eat with kachinas, you will know them as neighbors, you may be a kachina. Thus, when the kachinas are active in the ceremonies the community member who is the kachina participates in the spirit world. After the ceremony, the community member who takes on the role of the kachina lives with you, a constant reminder of the spirit. When you speak in this environment, you speak in the presence of the spirit. You speak directly to the spirit. So, both kachinas and kivas are the borders where the spirit world comes into the material world. There is in fact no speaking in the world without speaking from the spirit to the spirit.

The rhetoric of the Pueblo Fourth World is an integrated rhetoric where ceremony, council deliberations, and community dialogue function from a spiritual rather than a socio-political position and community members do not easily dissociate spiritual acts with political ones. All discourse, including teaching, is carried on within the spiritual framework of clan, kiva, and community.

What we learn from Pueblo peoples about rhetoric is essential to our ability to discover a rhetoric for the Fourth World. The rhetoric of power in the socio-political sense does not serve well in the Fourth World. Starting with the spirit of unity, the rhetoric of the Pueblo is based upon a consistent reminder that we are guests in the creator's world and that our purpose is to come together to assist one another and to learn from one another. This would seem to be a simple lesson for beings interested in spiritual perspectives and for the rhetors who believe in such a purpose. However, the emphasis on power rhetoric constantly forces us to accept other worlds, worlds less unified and less gracious.

I am reminded of Cherly Glenn's article wherein she describes the traditional rhetorical maps and how we benefit from exploring the boundaries of those maps. What the traditional maps have shown us is the roads we must travel in order to learn and use the rhetoric of power. Those well worn highways have led us to cities of power where rhetoric is a weapon used to divide and accommodate the codes of socio-political power. What the boundaries reveal are alternative rhetorical communities whose discourse is often situated in a spiritual rhetoric. Pueblo communities suggest to us that the fundamentals of rhetoric are guesthood, narratives, deliberations based on consensus rather than voting, and ceremony. All of these rhetorical modes are situated in the faithful belief that we begin in unity and communicate to remain a unified community. We might learn from them because the rhetorical perspective offered may well be essential to our communal survival in a postmodern world.

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